Chapter 7
Talent Management in Multinational Companies in Tunisia: Assessment and Prospects

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to take stock of the practices and draw up the prospects for a relatively new approach in which companies begin to measure efficiency. This approach is none other than talent management. This study is based on a survey conducted among a panel of multinational subsidiaries operating in Tunisia, all sectors combined, respondents on the basis of a self-administered online questionnaire. This survey is considered as the first and the major survey of talent management in the subsidiaries of multinationals operating in Tunisia.

INTRODUCTION
Nowadays, none can deny the importance of talent and its management in the quest of gaining sustainable competitive advantage and superior organizational performance. However, the concept of talent management remains underdeveloped and misunderstood (Mellahi and Collings, 2010; Collings and Scullion, 2009). The
literature review related to the field of talent management shows that this concept is born, rooted and related to the idea of talent shortages (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Coy and Ewing, 2007). This talent shortage doesn’t concern all kinds of organization; it’s specific to multinational enterprises (MNEs). In fact, MNEs are looking for a very talented people with a high potential to gain superior performance. But, these talents are not available at the same place, MNEs must hire them all over the world. These talents are called “global talent” or “high potential global workforce”. Hence, to cope with talent shortage, MNEs have developed the “global talent management - GTM” (Briscoe, Schuler and Claus, 2009; Collings, Scullion and Dowling, 2009).

For Tarique and Schuler (2010) global talent management is about systematically utilizing IHRM activities (complementary HRM policies and policies) to attract, develop, and retain individuals with high levels of human capital (e.g., competency, personality, motivation) consistent with the strategic directions of the multinational enterprises in a dynamic, highly competitive, and global environment and especially in emerging markets.

Knowing that the current assumptions and concepts in the global talent management literature are firmly embedded in the context of multinational firms based in western countries, they may not be appropriate for describing and examining talent management in multinational enterprises operating in emerging market contexts (Collings et al., 2011). Consequently, further empirical research on talent management in emerging markets is required (Yeung et al., 2008; Tymon et al., 2010; Vaiman and Holden, 2011 in Vaiman, Scullion, Collings, 2012).

Hence, the purpose of this chapter is to examine organizational talent management practices and insights from the perspective of HR professionals, top management… of the multinational subsidiaries operating in Tunisia (emerging market) along with specific information about their talent management policy and its fields (recruitment, employee development and employee retention). The study also explores the differences between organizations with and without specific talent management initiatives in place. This chapter is an answer to several questions: how do multinational subsidiaries operating in Tunisia identify talents? What they expect from talents? How they develop their talents? Which software do they dispose to manage their talents? How much time does top management spends to manage talents? In which way talent management has an impact on the firm’s performance? What are the results achieved through talent management?

This study contributes to cope with the quasi-inexistence of researches related to talent management in Tunisia. It opens perspectives to Tunisian researchers to undertake studies in this scope and to practitioners to have a broad idea about the practices of talent management in multinational subsidiaries operating in Tunisia.
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